

THE ROOTS OF EVIL



**CHARLES
ATLAS
says—**

I Trade **NEW** Bodies for **OLD**!

DO YOU WANT...

1 MORE MUSCLE BIGGER CHEST

Dynamic-Tension develops



your
chest
without
exhausting
exercises.

2

BIG ARM MUSCLES

You'll see and feel
your arm
muscles
BULGE
out with
super power
energy.



3

TIRELESS LEGS

Dynamic-Tension
makes your
legs strong



and
powerful.

4

MORE WEIGHT

You'll put on pounds
in the
right places.
Dynamic-
Tension
rebuilds you
inside and
out.



WOULDN'T YOU like to "pick out" the kind of body you want—trade in skin and bones or flab and fat for powerful **SOLID MUSCLE** exactly where you need it? I have given thousands the kind of bodies they always wanted. Now, see what I can do for YOU in the coupon below. You can **CHOOSE** a muscular, broader chest . . . slimmer waistline and hips . . . new trip-hammer power for your arms and legs . . . more solid weight in the **RIGHT PLACES**. You name it, I'll show you how you can get it **FAST**—or you pay nothing!

...THEN POST THIS NOW...

CHARLES ATLAS, Dept. 17-B, Chitty St., London, W.1

Dear Charles Atlas:
Here's the kind of
Body I'd like.

☐ MORE MUSCLE
BIGGER CHEST

☐ BIG ARM
MUSCLES

☐ TIRELESS LEGS

☐ MORE WEIGHT

Send me absolutely **FREE** details of
your amazing 7-day **TRIAL OFFER**
and your famous book explaining
"Dynamic-Tension" crammed with
photographs and valuable advice. I
understand this book is mine and does
not obligate me in any way.

NAME..... **AGE**.....
(Block letters, Please)

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You can
win
this
Trophy



*Charles
Atlas*

The ROOTS

WAR IS VIOLENCE; VIOLENCE IS EVIL.
THE CREED OF JONATHAN BROWN
FITTED ILL WITH THE ROLE OF THE
EXECUTIONER IN WHICH HE FOUND
HIMSELF.

of EVIL



Chapter 1. THE WOODSMAN

JONATHAN BROWN'S FATHER, SAMUEL, HAD BEEN A GAMEKEEPER. A STRONG COUNTRY LAD WHO HAD ANSWERED LORD KITCHENER'S APPEAL FOR VOLUNTEERS IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR.

IT'S A LONG WAY
TO TIPPERARY!
IT'S A LONG WAY TO GO...



BUT THE FRIGHTFUL CARNAGE OF THE SOMME AND THE NIGHTMARE BATTLE IN THE MUD OF PASSCHENDALE HAD CREATED A TERRIBLE REVULSION IN HIM AGAINST KILLING AND AGAINST WAR.

KAMERAD!
KAMERAD!



HE WAS NOT A MAN TO LET DOWN HIS COMRADES AND IN THE DESPERATE DAYS WHEN THE GERMANS LAUNCHED THEIR ALL-OUT DRIVE FOR THE CHANNEL PORTS, SAMUEL BROWN FOUGHT AS WELL AS THE NEXT MAN.

HERE THEY
COME AGAIN,
SAM!



THE ENEMY FOUGHT THEIR WAY INTO THE TRENCHES, AND IN A DESPERATE HAND-TO-HAND STRUGGLE A FLYING BULLET SHATTERED SAM'S LEFT ARM.

AAGH!



AFTER LONG MONTHS IN HOSPITAL, HE RETURNED TO HIS LONELY GAMEKEEPER'S JOB. MINUS HIS ARM, HIS EXPERIENCES SEEMED TO HAVE SEARED DEEP INTO HIS SOUL, FOR HE AVOIDED HIS FELLOW MEN...

REMEMBER THIS, JONATHAN. VIOLENCE IS EVIL. KILLING, WOUNDING... ALL BECAUSE SOME PEOPLE IN THE GOVERNMENT SAY YOU HAVE TO. EVIL, I TELL YOU!



YET HE TAUGHT HIS YOUNG SON, JONATHAN, THE TRICKS OF HIS TRADE, AND INSTILLED IN HIM THE LOVE OF A WELL-MADE SPORTING GUN.

AYE... A GOOD GUN IS A JOY TO THE HEART. IN OUR JOB IT'S NECESSARY... TO PROTECT THE WEAKER CREATURES AGIN THE HUNTERS. THAT'S WHAT A GUN IS FOR, JONATHAN.



UNDER HIS FATHER'S SKILFUL TUITION, JONATHAN COULD SOON PUT A .22 SLUG INTO THE BULL FIVES TIMES OUT OF SIX.

YE SNATCHED AGIN AT THAT LAST 'UN. TRY ANOTHER LOT... AND REMEMBER TO SQUEEZE THE TRIGGER... NOT PULL IT LIKE A TURNIP-TOP!



THE 'FLU EPIDEMIC OF 1936 CARRIED OFF BOTH SAMUEL BROWN AND HIS WIFE, MARY. THE BOY, JONATHAN, SO LONG KEPT FROM PEOPLE, WAS OFFERED HIS FATHER'S JOB.

DO THE JOB AS WELL AS YOUR FATHER DID AND I'LL BE SATISFIED, MY BOY.

THANK YOU, SIR FRANCIS... I'LL - I'LL DO MY BEST.



The Roots Of Evil

QUIETLY, HE SETTLED DOWN TO CARRY ON WITH THE JOB HE LOVED, A DOG HIS ONLY COMPANION.

A FINE NIGHT! AYE - A FINE NIGHT FOR OLD LUTHER, I'LL BET!



THE SECOND WORLD WAR HAD BEEN RAGING FOR EIGHTEEN MONTHS BUT IT HAD MADE NO IMPACT ON JONATHAN. ONLY THE PLANES WINGING OVERHEAD DISTURBED HIS NESTING PHEASANTS. MUCH NEARER TO HIM WAS THE PRIVATE WAR HE CARRIED OUT WITH OLD LUTHER PIGGOTT, THE POACHER!

NO, RANGER... NOT TONIGHT, OLD BOY... BACK TO YOUR KENNEL.



BY THE LIGHT OF A "POACHER'S MOON", OLD LUTHER PIGGOTT WAS GOING ABOUT HIS ILLEGAL BUSINESS. FOR YEARS IT HAD BEEN A BATTLE OF WITS BETWEEN HIM AND SAMUEL BROWN.

FETCH 'EM, BOY!
FETCH 'EM!



SENSES ATTUNED TO EVERY NUANCE OF THE NIGHT, OLD LUTHER SUDDENLY JERKED UPRIGHT.

SUMMAT'S ABOUT! CAN'T BE
THAT DANGED LAD O' SAM'S
SNOOPING AROUND,
CAN IT?



THE YOUNG GAMEKEEPER GLIDED SILENTLY THROUGH THE TREE-VERGED PATHS HE HAD KNOWN SINCE A CHILD. NOT A TWIG CRACKED TO BETRAY HIS PRESENCE.

ALL QUIET
DOWN KING'S
RIDE. MAYBE
LUTHER'S NOT
BISKING IT
TONIGHT.



The Roots Of Evil

IT WAS THE SOFT WHIRR OF A DISTURBED PARTRIDGE THAT SENT BOTH MEN TO COVER, THOUGH ONLY THE POACHER RUSTLED THE BUSHES. JONATHAN CREEPT ROUND AND WAS ON HIM LIKE A GHOST OUT OF THE NIGHT!

DROP THAT GUN!
I'VE GOT YOU
FAIR AND
SQUARE!

LAWKS ALIVE! YE MIGHT
'AVE KILLED ME...
COMING UP LIKE THAT!
ME 'EART AIN'T SO
GOOD...

THE CRAFTY OLD MAN PITCHED A WHINE INTO HIS VOICE.

IT'S THAT WHAT STOPS ME
WORKIN', LAD. ANOTHER
SUMMONS AND IT'LL BE PRISON
FOR ME AN' WHAT'LL 'APPEN
TO ME FIVE KIDS
THEN?

JONATHAN WAS EASY MEAT FOR THE OLD VILLAIN. SOFT-HEARTED, THE THOUGHT OF FIVE STARVING CHILDREN WAS TOO MUCH FOR HIM.

ALL RIGHT. THIS
TIME I'LL LET
YOU OFF, BUT
NEXT TIME...

OH, THERE WON'T BE
A NEXT TIME. NOT
WITH A LAD LIKE
YOU AROUND!

WHILST OLD LUTHER SCURRED OFF, LAUGHING UNDER HIS GRIZZLED BEARD, JONATHAN CONTINUED ON HIS ROUNDS. THE TERRIFIED SCREAM OF A RABBIT STOPPED HIM IN HIS TRACKS...

A STOAT, I'LL BE BOUND. THE CRUEL LITTLE CRITTER!



ANOTHER SOUND, THE DEATH WHIMPER OF THE VICTIM, DREW HIS EYES TO THE QUICK MOVEMENT ACROSS THE FIELD. IT WAS ENOUGH...



UNERRINGLY, THE SLUG STRUCK HOME ON THE SLINKING RAIDER. THE WOODSMAN NEVER WASTED A SHOT.

POOR LITTLE DEVIL! NEVER STOOD A CHANCE? DO YOU?



AS HE HEADED BACK TO HIS COTTAGE, JONATHAN STUMBLED ACROSS SOMETHING THAT BROUGHT A SUDDEN CHANGE TO HIS GENTLE EXPRESSION.

A SNARE! THAT'LL BE LUTHER P. SCOTT'S! THE DRATTED OLD HYPOCRITE!



HE TOOK THE INJURED HARE TO THE COTTAGE AND THERE BATHED AND TREATED THE WOUND. THAT WAS THE CREED JONATHAN HAD LEARNED... MERCY FOR THE HUNTED - BUT NONE FOR THE HUNTER.

I'LL TAN THAT POACHER'S HIDE FOR HIM NEXT TIME WE MEET! I'LL GIVE HIM SOMETHING TO WHINE ABOUT!



BUT HE DID NOT GET THE CHANCE TO MEET OLD LUTHER AGAIN. NEXT MORNING, THE POSTMAN MADE A VERY RARE VISIT TO THE COTTAGE IN THE WOODS.

GOVERNMENT LETTER FOR 'EE, JONATHAN. IT'LL BE CALL-UP PAPERS FOR T' ARMY, I'M THINKING O'VE B'N DELIVERING PLENTY OF 'EM!

THANKS, GEORGE. WHAT DOES THE ARMY WANT W TH ME?



IT WAS JONATHAN'S CONSCRIPTION PAPERS HE WENT FOR ADVICE TO HIS EMPLOYER, MR FRANCIS WELDERDON.

SO IT'S COME AT LAST, JONATHAN! YOU'LL GO AND DO YOUR BIT, AS YOUR FATHER DID IN THE LAST WAR. IT WILL BE STRANGE... A DIFFERENT WAY OF LIFE FOR YOU, MY BOY!



*Chapter 2.***THE CONSCRIPT**

SO JONATHAN BROWN, STILL SLIGHTLY BEWILDERED BY THE SUMMONS, EVENTUALLY FOUND HIMSELF WITH A BUNCH OF CONSCRIPTS ON A BLEAK PARADE GROUND.

GET INTO TWO RANKS! TWO! ONE - TWO PERISHIN' RANKS, I SAID!



THE OTHERS USED TO THE DISCIPLINE OF FACTORY OR OFFICE, SOON SETTLED DOWN TO THE ROUTINE OF RECRUIT TRAINING. BUT NOT JONATHAN...

YOU THERE! BROWN! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE MARCHING!



TO THE OTHERS IN HIS HUT, JONATHAN WAS A BIG, FRIENDLY-ENOUGH GUY, WHO WAS ALWAYS GOOD FOR A 'TOLCH'.

ALL RIGHT, TOSH - BUT THAT MAKES IT TWO POUNDS YOU OWE ME...

GOT A FEW BOB TILL PAY PARADE, CHUMP



BUT HE WAS A THORN IN THE SIDE OF THE LIVERISH CORPORAL PEDLAR PALMER. UNTIDY ON PARADE, THE POOREST OF THE LOT AT SQUAD DRILL, HE INFILTRATED THE BULLYING N.C.O.

FARMER BROWN! COME HERE! I WANT YOU...



FARMER BROWN! THAT'S WHAT PALMER HAD CHRISTENED H.M. THE N.C.O. TOOK EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE THE COUNTRY BOYS LIFE A MISERY, TREATING HIM AS A PERSONAL BATMAN.

GET THIS WEBBING BLANCOED.
THEN CLEAN THESE SHOES
AND PRESS THE TROUSERS.
AND MAKE A GOOD JOB
OF 'EM - OR ELSE!



AS SOON AS THE CORPORAL HAD LEFT THE ROOM, THE OTHERS CROWDED ROUND THEIR BIG COMRADE.

COR! WHY DON'T YOU
TELL 'IM WHERE TO GET
OFF? HE CAN'T MAKE
YOU DO 'S CIVVY KIT!

HE CAN'T?
BUT HE'S THE
CORPORAL!

CORPORAL OR NOT -
IT'S AGAINST THE
RULES!



IF VALETING THE CORPORAL'S CIVVIES WAS AGAINST THE RULES - THEN, OF COURSE, HE COULD NOT DO IT! THAT WAS SIMPLE ENOUGH - TO FARMER. HE WAITED FOR PEDLAR'S RETURN TO TELL HIM SO.

RULES! WHAT THE DEVIL ARE YOU GABBING ABOUT? I TOLD YOU TO DO IT! SEE?

SORRY, CORPORAL... YOU MIGHT GET INTO TROUBLE, TOO, IF I DO.



PEDLAR PALMER HAD RULED THE ROOST FOR A LONG TIME. HIS BULK AND SAVAGE TEMPER HAD BROOKED NO RIVALS. NOW THIS COUNTRY LAD BIGGER THAN HIM, WAS MAKING HIM A LAUGHING STOCK!

LOOK, STUPID - I MAKE THE RULES IN HERE! YOU'LL DO AS I SAY - OR I'LL FORGET MY TAPES AND GIVE YOU THE LICKING OF YOUR LIFE!



THE MEN IN THE HUT WAITED WITH BREATHLESS EXPECTANCY, BUT FARMER SIMPLY GRASPED THE AGGRESSOR'S WRISTS IN AN IRON GRIP AND FORCED THEM AWAY.

TAKE YOUR HANDS OFF ME, CORPORAL. IF YOU SAY IT'S A RULE TO DO YOUR KIT, THEN I'LL DO IT!



"WAS A FASCO! THE BIG FELLOW HAD BACKED DOWN. TO THE ONLOOKERS IT COULD ONLY MEAN ONE THING... FARMER GROWN WAS YELLOW.

NOW YOU'RE SHOWING SENSE! OKAY... GET ON WITH IT!

COR! ALL THAT SIZE ... AND NO GUTS!



AFTER THAT, FARMER WAS LEFT EVEN MORE ON HIS OWN. ON EVENINGS OFF, HE WANDERED THE LONELY STREETS OF THE CITY... HIS MIND FAR AWAY...

I WONDER WHAT RANGERS DOING RIGHT NOW? I'LL BET THE OLD DOG NUSSES ME.



EVEN HIS MARKSMANSHIP, THE ONE THING THAT MIGHT HAVE GAINED HIM RESPECT, WAS DENIED HIM. ON THE DAY THE SQUAD WAS DUE TO GO TO THE RANGES...

NOT YOU, BROWN! YOU CAN STOP HERE AS BUT ORDERLY. I'LL SEE YOU GET A PASS ON THE RANGE CLASSIFICATION RECORD.



SO, WHILST THE OTHERS WENT TO THE RANGES, FARMER STAYED BEHIND, FONDLING A R.F.L.E HE HAD NOT BEEN ALLOWED TO FIRE.



THE WEEKS OF TRAINING ENDED. ONE NIGHT HE RETURNED TO THE HUT TO FIND IT SEETHING WITH EXCITEMENT.

HEY, BIG 'UN - 'EARD THE GEN? WE'RE ON DRAFT FOR OVERSEAS - THE WHOLE BATTALION! PEDLAR PALMER, TOO. TIME HE LOST HIS CUSHY BILLET HERE!

OVERSEAS?



Chapter 3

THE SNIPER

THE BATTALION WENT TO BURMA - TO JOIN THE FORGOTTEN FOURTEENTH ARMY. IT SEEMED ONLY YESTERDAY THEY WERE ON THE RANGES - AND NOW THEY WERE FIGHTING THEIR FIRST BATTLE.

WATCH THE CHALING, CORPORAL!
THEY MAY BE TAKING THE
VALLEY ROUTE...



FARMER BROWN WAS WITH THEM, THOUGH HE HAD NO HEART FOR THE FIGHTING. THE JAPANESE MEANT NOTHING TO HIM AND IN HIS SUB-CONSCIOUS, HIS FATHER'S TEACHING HELD STRONG.

CHALING?
WHAT'S THAT,
TOSH?

VALLEY, BOY! THIS
VALLEY IN FRONT OF US.
SHOULD BE THICK WITH
NIPS ANY TIME NOW.



THEY HAD TAKEN FARMER'S RIFLE AND GIVEN HIM A STEN CARBINE. THEY HAD TAUGHT HIM HOW TO LOAD, HOW TO STRIP IT... BUT THEY HAD NOT TOLD HIM ITS EFFECTUAL RANGE WAS ONLY 50 TO 100 YARDS.

SPRAY THEM WITH BULLETS, THE CORPORAL SAID! BUT WHY SHOULD I? THEY'VE DONE ME NO HARM!



SOON, A MASS OF JAPS CAME PADING OUT OF THE JUNGLE, HEADING ACROSS THE BASE OF THE CHAUNG...

THERE THEY ARE! WAIT TILL THEY GET WELL IN! NOW... FIRE!



FARMER FIRED AS ORDERED, SPRAYING THE BULLETS FROM THE STEN IN A TIGHT ARC. HE COULD NOT SEE THE EFFECT OF HIS OWN FIRE. THE JAPS WERE FALLING... TO THE BREN-GUN.

KEEP IT UP!
WE'VE GOT 'EM
ON THE RUN!



BUT THE ENEMY CAME ON, FIRING - RUNNING - DROPPING - FIRING AGAIN, CLOSER AND CLOSER YET, THEY GOT TO THE PLATOON POSITION...

THE HARDER YOU KNOCK
'EM DOWN, THE QUICKER
THEY BOUNCE UP
AGAIN!



FARMER HAD WATCHED THE JAP APPROACH WITH INTEREST, ADMIRING THEIR USE OF THE GROUND. CERTAINLY THERE WAS NO HATE IN HIM FOR THESE LITTLE FOREIGNERS IN HIS INTEREST, HE FORGOT TO FIRE!

BROWN! WHAT THE BLAZES ARE YOU UP TO? START FIRING!

OH - YES, CORPORAL, SORRY...



THE JAPS WERE WITHIN A FEW YARDS. SUDDENLY, THEIR OFFICER BOUNCED UP, YELLING ORDERS FOR A BAYONET CHARGE. FARMER SAW THE UGLY FIGURE AND ALMOST AUTOMATICALLY HE AIMED HIS GUN AT THE MAN.

BANZAI!



THE STEN FIRE APPEARED TO HAVE NO EFFECT AT ALL. FARMER FLUNG THE CARBINE AWAY IN DISGUST AND PREPARED TO DEAL WITH THE ONCOMING ATTACKER WITH HIS BARE HANDS.

STUPID, LITTLE GUN! THAT WOULDN'T KILL A STOUT AT NINETY PACES!



IT WAS A QUICKLY-THROWN VOLLEY OF GRENADES FROM ALONG THE LINE THAT SAVED HIM TANGLING WITH THE BAYONET. THE JAPANESE ATTACK WAS BEING DECIMATED AS THE RANGE CLOSED.

RAASH!



HE WAS PICKING UP THE STEN WHEN THE HARSH-VOICED CORPORAL LAMMED INTO HIM, PEDLAR, FROM THE CORNER OF HIS EYE, HAD SEEN HIM THROW IT DOWN.

YES - PICK IT UP QUICK!
IT'S ALL OVER NOW!
YOU WON'T HAVE TO
FIGHT!

I DON'T GET YOU,
CORPORAL.



DIDN'T WANT TO
FIGHT, ANYWAY.
NOT TO KILL
ANYBODY.

WHAT SORT OF TALK
IS THAT? I SAW YOU DUMP
THE STEN! I'LL HAVE
TO REPORT THIS!

AW, LAY OFF
'IM, CORP...
WE'VE ALL HAD
ENOUGH!



LIEUTENANT FORBES DREW A REBORN BREATH WHEN CORPORAL PALMER STORMED UP TO HIM WITH THE CHARGE.

HE WOULD IF HE'D HAD THE CHANCE, SR! HE'D GOT RID OF H.S. STEN!

THERE SEEMS TO BE SOME CONFUSION, CORPORAL. BROWN DIDN'T ACTUALLY RUN AWAY DID HE?



THERE WAS INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO TAKE THE CASE TO THE C.O., AND FORBES LIKED THE COUNTRYMAN, BROWN, ANYWAY.

THIS TALK OF YOURS ABOUT NOT WANTING TO KILL JAPS IS ROT, BROWN... DANGEROUS ROT! I'M TAKING YOU OUT OF THE PLATOON, YOU CAN BE MY BATMAN.

BUT, SR...

THAT WILL BE ALL, CORPORAL!



ONCE MORE FARMER BROWN WAS ON HIS OWN, CLEANING THE OFFICER'S KIT, DRIVING HIS JEEP. HE LIKED IT THAT WAY, ESPECIALLY AS HE WAS ABLE TO TAKE A STRAY NATIVE DOG AS HIS PET, TOO.

HERE, SCRUFFY, MIND YOU DON'T BREAK YOUR TEETH ON IT!



THE COMPANY HAD DUG IN AFTER THE BATTLE, BUT WERE CONTINUALLY HARRIED BY SNIPERS. FIVE MEN HAD BEEN KILLED BY SHOTS THAT WHINED OUT OF THE JUNGLE.

AAGH!

TUG!



AFTER EACH SUDDEN DEATH, THERE HAD BEEN AN ORGANISED HUNT FOR THE SNIPER. BUT WITHOUT SUCCESS.

WILSON, SIR! HE'S CAUGHT HIS PACKET NOW. WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO, SIR? THE MEN ARE GETTING JITTERY.



IT WAS LIKE TRYING TO CATCH A SHADOW!

WE'VE GOT TO CHANGE THE PLAN. THE DEVIL FADES AS SOON AS HE HEARS US START AFTER HIM. I'VE GOT AN IDEA, SERGEANT



LATER, FORBES RETURNED TO THE FORWARD POSITIONS — WITH A SNIPER'S RIFLE.

SERGEANT — GET THE CHAPS ROUND. I WANT A WORD WITH THEM.

RIGHT, SIR.



The Roots Of Evil

WHILE THE OFFICER TALKED TO THE MEN, FARMER EXAMINED THE WEAPON WITH LIVELY CURIOSITY. WITH SUCH A RIFLE, A MARKSMAN COULD FIRE ACCURATELY UP TO 1000 YARDS. FARMER FELT THE WEIGHT BALANCE SNUGLY IN HIS HANDS AND LONGED TO TRY IT.

IT'S LOVELY! THERE'D BE NO NEED TO SPRAY BULLETS WITH THIS!



LEUTENANT FORBES' APPEAL FOR A VOLUNTEER WAS MEETING WITH NO ENTHUSIASM. THE UNSEEN ENEMY COULD PROBABLY PUT A BULLET INTO THE STALKER BEFORE HE GOT A CHANCE TO USE THE RIFLE.

WELL - YOU SEE WHAT THEY MEAN SIR? IT'S GOING TO BE A DICEY JOB... A DAMNED DICEY JOB!



FARMER HAD BEEN IGNORED, AS IF HE DID NOT COUNT. HE A SUDDEN GLEAM CAME IN HIS EYE AS THE OFFICER'S WORDS REACHED HIM.

DON'T TELL ME
THERE SN'T ONE MAN
HERE WHO WON'T
GO AND SNARE THAT
JAP!



MAYBE IT WAS THE WORD "SNARE" THAT DID IT. HE COULD UNDERSTAND THAT... BUT HIS OFFER WAS GREETED WITH R.BALD LAUGHTER.

ARE YOU SURE
YOU COULD HANDLE
THA R.FLE, BROWN?

AYE, M USED
TO R.FLES
SIR.

LET HIM GO!
IT'LL BE GOOD
REDANCE!



LIEUTENANT FORBES HAD ASKED FOR A VOLUNTEER AND HE HAD GOT ONE! LATER, HE TRIED TO TALK FARMER OUT OF IT, BUT THE THRILL OF POACHER-STALKING HAD GRIPPED THE WOODSMAN — AND HE HAD TO TRY THAT BEAUTIFUL RIFLE! HE SET OFF ON HIS LONE PATROL — TO MAKE A RENDEZVOUS, PERHAPS, WITH DEATH...



A MILE AWAY, THE QUARRY WAS RESTING UP BEFORE COMING IN AGAIN TO PICK OFF FURTHER VICTIMS. THE JAPANESE WAS CAREFULLY CUTTING ANOTHER NOTCH INTO THE BUTT OF HIS WEAPON, COUNTING AS HE DID SO.



FARMER HAD GONE FORWARD WITH STEALTH, LONG AND DEARLY LEARNED IN HIS OWN TRADE. BUT HE KNEW HE HAD TO MAKE THE SNIPER BETRAY HIMSELF DELIBERATELY. HE DISTURBED A CONVEY OF BIRDS...

THAT WILL WARN HIM SOMEBODY'S ABOUT!



FOR TEN PULSING MINUTES HE STAYED STILL, LISTENING EVERY SENSE ALERT. BUT APART FROM THE USUAL JUNGLE NOISES, THERE WAS NO SOUND...

HE'S LYING VERY LOW OR THERE'S NOBODY HERE AT ALL. I'LL RISK GOING FARTHER.



THE TREES THINNED INTO A CLEARING SEVERAL HUNDRED YARDS ACROSS THE OPEN GROUND. A JAP GAVE A LOW HISS OF EXCITEMENT.

AAH!

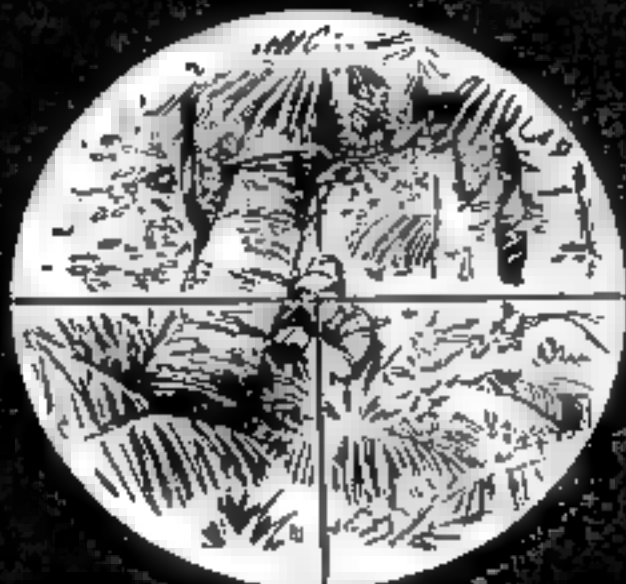


SOME HAZ-TRIGGER SENSE OF SURVIVAL MADE FARMER FLING HIMSELF FORWARD AT THAT SPLIT SECOND, BUT IN THAT BRIEF INSTANT, HIS MIND HAD REGISTERED THE MUZZLE FLASH.



HE LAD HIS SIGHTS ON THE HEART OF THE FLASH AND SWIFTLY ADJUSTED THE DRUM-HEAD OF THE TELESCOPE. THE FIELD OF VIEW CLEARED...

COOLLY, WITHOUT A TREMOR, FARMER'S AIM FOLLOWED THE SLIGHTLY MOVING SNIPER. HE SQUEEZED THE TRIGGER...



HE FOUND THE SNIPER UNCONSCIOUS, BLOOD POURING FROM THE INCISED LINE WHERE THE 303 BULLET HAD CREASED HIS HEAD.

NOT BAD! NOT BAD AT ALL! NOW, MY LAD, LET'S FIX THAT CUT BEFORE YOU COME TO



AS HE DEFTLY APPLIED THE FIELD-DRESSING, THE JAP'S EYES OPENED. REALISATION TOOK HOLD OF THE MAN AND HE BIT VICIOUSLY AT FARMER'S HAND...

WHY, YOU LITTLE SAVAGE! YOU'RE AS BAD AS A HURT RAT!



HE DEALT WITH THE EXPLOSIVE LITTLE ORIENTAL AS HE WOULD HAVE DEALT WITH ANY WOUNDED ANIMAL - GENTLY, BUT FIRMLY! THE MEN IN THE PLATOON STARED IN AMAZEMENT AS HE CAME OUT OF THE JUNGLE.

FOR CRYIN' OUT LOUD!
TAKE A
DEKKO AT
THIS!

HE NOT
ONLY FINDS 'EM,
HE BRINGS 'EM
BACK ALIVE!



HEARING THE EXCITED SHOUTS, FORBES HURRIED TO THE SCENE. HIS EYES POPPED! FARMER ANSWERED HIS RAPID QUESTIONS WITH THE GULELESS LOGIC OF THE SIMPLE MAN...

BUT WHY? WHY DIDN'T YOU KILL HIM WHEN YOU HAD THE CHANCE?

KILL HIM! YOU SAID YOU WANTED HIM STALKED, SIR. SURE, HE TRIED TO SHOOT ME - BUT THAT WAS JUST PART OF THE GAME. YOU MIGHT SAY ..



PEDLAR PALMER WAITED UNTIL FORBES HAD LEFT TO REPORT TO H.Q. THEN HE PROCEEDED TO CUT THE NEW HERO DOWN TO SIZE.

DON'T COME ALL THAT BULL ABOUT SHARP-SHOOTING, BROWN! IT WAS LUCK - SHEER LUCK! I REMEMBER YOU SCROUNGING OUT OF THE RANGE CLASSIFICATION BACK HOME.



The Roots Of Evil

THE LYING ACCUSATION LED FARMER BROWN INTO AN UNCHARACTERISTIC ACTION. HE CHALLENGED PALMER.

YOU STOPPED ME GOING TO THE RANGES, CORPORAL. AS FOR SHARP-SHOOTING, I'VE GOT TWENTY RUPEES THAT SAYS I'M AS GOOD AS YOU... IF NOT BETTER?



CORPORAL PALMER HAD WORN THE "CROSSED RIFLES IN LAUREL WREATH" BADGE OF THE MARKSMAN FOR YEARS AND WAS PROUD OF IT. A LOT OF THE MEN, WHO KNEW HIM AS THE BEST SHOT IN THE COMPANY, WERE WILLING TO BACK HIM.

YOU'RE ON! I'LL SHOOT YOU OFF WITH ANYTHING FROM A STEN TO A VICKERS MACHINE-GUN!

MY MONEY'S ON PEDLAR! ANY OF YOU BLOKES WANT TO BET?



NEWS OF THE CONTEST SOON REACHED THE LEUTENANT AND HE GAVE IT HIS BACKING CONSIDERING IT GOOD FOR MORALE.

NORMAL RANGE RULES TWENTY ROUNDS RAPID AT TWO HUNDRED YARDS FOLLOWED BY TEN ROUNDS APPLICATION AT SIX HUNDRED YARDS. PREPARE TO FIRE.



THEY WERE USING THE ORDINARY ISSUE .303-INCH SHORT MAGAZINE LEE-ENFIELD RIFLE. THE MAGAZINE HELD TEN ROUNDS AND THE CHARGER CLIP FIVE ROUNDS IT WAS POSSIBLE FOR A TRAINED MAN TO GET OFF TWENTY AIMED ROUNDS IN ONE MINUTE...

FIRE!



BOTH MEN SCORED TEN BULLS WITH THEIR FIRST TEN SHOTS. THEN PEDLAR PALMER'S TRAINING TOLD THE RAPIDITY WITH WHICH HE RAMMED IN TWO NEW CLIPS OF FIVE, PUT HIM AHEAD OF THE SLOWER FARMER.

PEDLAR'S TWO ROUNDS AHEAD! FARMER'S FUMBLER THE CLIP CHANGE!



AS FORBES' REVOLVER SIGNALED THE END OF THE MATCH, PEDLAR FIRED HIS TWENTIETH SHOT. FARMER HAD STILL TWO ROUNDS LEFT.

FINE SHOOTING! ALL BULLS! BUT BROWN LOSES TWO POINTS ON TIME!



GOOD OLD PEDLAR! HE'S GOT IT BUTTONED UP!

THE RAPID FIRE AT 200 YARDS HAD SIMULATED BATTLE-CONDITIONS, AND THEY HAD USED THE BATTLE-SIGHT. APPLIED SHOOTING AT 800 YARDS WAS A DIFFERENT KETTLE OF FISH!

TEN ROUNDS APPLICATION! FIRE IN YOUR OWN TIME!



BOTH MEN TOOK CAREFUL AND DELIBERATE AIM. THE SMALL BLACK CIRCLE OF THE BULL LOOKED TANTALISINGLY SMALL. THE FIRST SHOTS WERE ALMOST SIMULTANEOUS.

NUMBER ONE TARGET - BULL! NUMBER TWO TARGET - BULL!



FOR EVERY 'BULL' REGISTERED ON PEDLAR'S NO. 1 TARGET, FORBES ANNOUNCED A 'BULL' ON THE NO. 2 TARGET. FARMER SEEMED DELIBERATELY TO DELAY HIS SHOT UNTIL PEDLAR HAD FIRED. PEDLAR, EXPECTING TO INCREASE HIS LEAD, BEGAN TO FEEL HOUNDED - AND HIS AIM SUFFERED...

NUMBER
ONE TARGET -
INNER!
NUMBER
TWO TARGET -
BULL!

PEDLAR'S SLIPPING!
HE'S SLIPPING!
KEEP IT UP,
FARMER BOY!



PEDLAR'S LAST THREE SHOTS WERE INNERS. FARMER SCORED TEN BULLS. ON AGGREGATE, FARMER HAD WON BY A SINGLE POINT!

ABSOLUTELY FIRST-CLASS SHOOTING!
BAD LUCK CORPORAL! NOW, BROWN -
YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY WASTED AS A
BATMAN! THERE'S A SNIPER'S
VACANCY WAITING FOR YOU TO FILL!



THE EXCITEMENT OF THE CONTEST DRAINED RAPIDLY FROM FARMER. NOW THEY WANTED HIM BACK IN THE KILLING LINE! HE DID NOT WANT TO DESTROY LIFE!

I'D LIKE TIME TO THINK IT OVER, SR. IF THAT'S ALL RIGHT WITH YOU



SHAKING OFF THE EXCITED GOOD WISHES OF HIS SUPPORTERS, FARMER WANDERED DEJECTEDLY BACK TO THE TENT LINES.

OH, DARN IT! WHAT THE DEVIL'S THE MATTER WITH ME? WHY CAN'T I BE LIKE ALL THE OTHER BLOKES?



PEDLAR PALMER, HIS TEMPER BOILING UP, HAD ALREADY REACHED THE LINES. HIS DEFEAT RILED HIM. HIS PRIDE HAD BEEN HURT. HE WAS READY TO VENT HIS SPLEEN ON ANYTHING - AND FARMER'S DOG, SCRUFFY, PROVIDED A READY EXCUSE...

STOP THAT YAPPING, YOU MANGY CUR! STOP IT!



AS THE DOG YAPPED, PEDLAR'S ANGER GOT THE BETTER OF HIM. HE AIMED A SAVAGE KICK AT SCRUFFY, BUT THE FRIGHTENED MONGREL MOVED QUICKLY OUT OF RANGE...



THE SIGHT OF THE COWARDLY ATTACK ON HIS DOG, STOPPED FARMER IN HIS TRACKS. THE GENTLENESS FELL AWAY FROM HIM...



THE TWO BIG MEN FACED EACH OTHER LIKE GLADIATORS, EACH SIZING UP THE OTHER'S POTENTIAL. THE NEWS OF THE IMMINENT FIGHT SPREAD RAPIDLY.

I'M GOING TO MAKE YOU PAY FOR IT, PALMER.

THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK. LET'S SEE HOW GOOD YOU ARE WITH YOUR FISTS BROWN.



FARMER BROWN HAD NEVER FOUGHT WITH HIS FISTS IN HIS LIFE. BUT HE HAD THE STRENGTH OF A BULL AND THE COURAGE OF A MAN INCAPABLE OF FEAR. PEDLAR PALMER HAD BEEN BROUGHT UP IN A HARDER SCHOOL.

I'VE BEEN WAITING A LONG TIME FOR THIS!



FARMER CAME IN LIKE A WEST-COUNTRY WRESTLER, SPONGING FOR A GRP. BUT TWO MORE THUDING BLOWS KNOCKED HIM DOWN. SLOWLY, HIS SENSES REELING, HE CLIMBED TO HIS FEET.

GET UP AND FIGHT LIKE A MAN, YOU SNIVELLING COW!



THEN PEDLAR MADE THE MISTAKE OF BRINGING THE FIGHT TO CLOSE QUARTERS. IN AN INSTANT, HE FOUND HIMSELF CAUGHT IN A RIB-CRACKING GRIP...

MY GOSH! PEDLAR'S GOING BLUE IN THE FACE! MAYBE WE'D BETTER STEP IN!



IT TOOK FOUR MEN TO
BREAK THE GRIP
FARMER HAD ON THE
CORPORAL. THERE WAS
NO GENTLENESS IN THE
LONELY ONE NOW.

FARMER! PACK
IT IN! HE'S HAD
ENOUGH! FARMER!
YOU'LL KILL HIM!



WHEN THEY WERE PRISED APART, PEDLAR DROPPED, CLOSE TO
UNCONSCIOUSNESS. THE ENRAGED FARMER HAD TO BE FORCIBLY
RESTRAINED.

IT'S BEEN A PROPER
EYE-OPENER TODAY! OLD
PLODDER BROWN BRINGS
IN A JAP, SHOTS LIKE
A WIZARD, AND
VOW - THIS!



Chapter 4. The MOMENT of TRUTH

FULL OF REMORSE AT HIS EXHIBITION OF VIOLENCE FARMER REVERTED BACK TO HIS OWN LONESOME WAY. HE AGREED TO ACT AS SNIPER, BUT PRIVATELY HE DOUBTED HIS ABILITY TO KILL COLDLY AND DELIBERATELY A TRAIT ALL SNIPERS MUST DEVELOP.

THE JAPS ARE DIGGING IN ARMOUR AND ARTILLERY ROUND OUR PER METER. THERE'LL BE A FIGHTING PATROL GOING OUT TONIGHT, BROWN. YOU GO WITH THEM AND SELECT YOUR POSITION.

YES, SIR.



WITH THREE AMMUNITION POUCHES, 'K' RATIONS AND WATER, FARMER STARTED OFF WITH THE PATROL. HE WOULD NOT RETURN WITH THEM AT FIRST LIGHT, FOR HE HAD A TWENTY-FOUR-HOUR ASSIGNMENT.

ALL SET? FALL IN BEHIND US, FARMER. LET ME KNOW WHEN YOU'RE READY TO BREAK AWAY.



CAUTIOUSLY, THE PATROL MADE ITS WAY FORWARD. THEN ONE MAN TRIPPED OVER A CUNNINGLY CONCEALED TRIPWIRE. THE NIGHT WAS SHATTERED BY THE EXPLOSIONS

GOOD GRIEF!
THAT'S DONE IT!

AAGH!

THEY COULD HEAR THE WILD FIRING OF THE ALARMED ENEMY. SURPRISE HAD BEEN LOST AND THERE WAS THE DANGER OF A COUNTER-ATTACK. THE SERGEANT CHECKED ANXIOUSLY...

JOE? SMUDGER?
FARMER?
YOU ALL
RIGHT?

OKAY HERE,
SARGE, BUT FENDER'S
CAUGHT IT IN THE
LEG.

WHILST THE OTHERS RAPIDLY RETRACED THEIR STEPS FARMER SOUGHT A SUITABLE TREE FOR HIS PURPOSE. THE JAPS HAD STOPPED FIRING BUT WERE OBVIOUSLY RELUCTANT TO MOVE INTO THE JUNGLE IN THE DARKNESS.

THIS LOOKS OKAY. PLENTY OF RO-AGE AND SHOULD GIVE A DECENT FIELD OF FIRE.



HAVING ESTABLISHED HIS POSITION FARMER WAITED FOR THE DAWN TO BREAK. SOON HE WOULD HAVE TO DECIDE WHETHER TO USE HIS RIFLE TO KILL NO MATTER HOW HE TRIED. HE COULD NOT FORGET HIS FATHER'S TEACHING THAT VIOLENCE WAS EVIL.

THEY'LL HAVE WIVES AND KIDS - PARENTS WHO WORRY ABOUT 'EM LIKE ANY OTHER FOLK.



THE FIRST MOVEMENT HE SAW WAS AN ENEMY PARTY SENT OUT TO INVESTIGATE THE EXPLODED BOOBY TRAP. THEY CAME FORWARD CAUTIOUSLY...

... EIGHT... NINE... TEN,
TOO MANY TO GET
ALL AT ONCE.



IT WOULD BE BAD SNIPER TACTICS TO TAKE ON TEN AT ONCE... AND FARMER WAS RELIEVED TO BE ABLE TO DELAY THE DECISION HE STILL HAD TO MAKE. HE WATCHED THEM RE-LOAD THE BOOBY-TRAPS...

TIGHTER, MITSU!
THEN PRIME THE
GRENADES. IT
WAS, PERHAPS,
AN ANIMAL
LAST NIGHT.



ONCE, FARMER HAD THE MARK OF A MAN'S HEAD IN HIS SIGHT, BUT HIS FINGER RESTED LOOSELY ON THE TRIGGER. HE CONSOLED HIMSELF WITH THE KNOWLEDGE THAT SUCH A SHOT WOULD HAVE BEEN FOOLISH.

SO EASY. IT
COULD HAVE BEEN
SO EASY!



WHEN ALL WAS CLEAR, HE WAITED FOR ANOTHER FOUR HOURS. THEN HE CAREFULLY AIMED AT THE TAUT TRIP WIRE ACROSS THE TRACK BELOW. IT WAS A DIFFICULT SHOT...



FARMER GOT GRIM ENJOYMENT OUT OF THE ALARM AMONG THE ENEMY AND AGAIN HE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO PICK OFF A MAN, MANY MEN... BUT DID NOT TAKE IT. IN THE AFTERNOON, THE JAPS BROUGHT A FIELD GUN WITH N'S RANGE...

STILL RISKY,
IT WOULDN'T
BE HARD TO
SPOT THE
FLASH.



BY DUSK, THE GUN WAS EMPLACED AND ONE MAN LEFT TO GUARD IT. THERE COULD BE NO FURTHER EXCUSE. RELUCTANTLY, FARMER TOOK A.I.M...

AT THE LAST MOMENT, HIS FINGER FROZE - HE COULD NOT KILL THE UNKNOWN MAN. FARMER MOVED THE RIFLE SLIGHTLY, AND SMASHED THE VALUABLE GUNSIGHT, GIVING THE JAP THE SHOCK OF HIS LIFE!



AFTER DARK, HE RETURNED TO HIS BASE TO REPORT THE LACK OF OPPORTUNITY AND THE DESTRUCTION OF THE GUNLIGHT.

"OO BAD!
STILL, THEY MAY
FIND IT DIFFICULT
TO REPLACE THE
SGT. NOW, GET
SOME SLEEP. THERE'S
ANOTHER TASK
LAD ON FOR
TONIGHT.



FARMER SLEPT UNEASILY AND
NEXT MORNING, PARADED
WITH CORPORAL PALMER
AND FOUR OTHER MEN.

TWO ENEMY PRISONERS ARE NEEDED
FOR IDENTIFICATION. THREE PATROLS
HAVE FAILED TO BRING ANY IN FOR
THE JAPS PREFER DEATH TO CAPTURE.
BUT SHOTS LIKE YOU TWO, CORPORAL
PALMER AND BROWN, MAY BE
ABLE TO CREASE A
COUPLE... AS BROWN DO
WITH THAT
SNAKE.



FORBES DID NOT KNOW OF THE BITTER, HUMILIATING RAGE THAT HAD BURNED IN PEDLAR PALMER SINCE HIS DEFEAT AT FARMER'S HANDS. HE MIGHT HAVE THOUGHT TWICE IF HE HAD.

LISTEN, BROWN
M IN CHARGE
OF THE PARTY
IS THAT
UNDERSTOOD?

OF COURSE
CORPORAL. YOU'VE
GOT THE TAPES
UP.



THE PATROL WORKED ROUND TO THE FLANKS OF THE LAP LINES. ONLY THERE WOULD THEY FIND STRAY ENEMY SOLDIERS.

THIS MAY DO, BROWN,
YOU GO ACROSS THE CLEARING
AND GET INTO THE BIG TREE.
I'LL BE UP THIS ONE. YOU
OTHER MEN KEEP WELL
HIDDEN.



FARMER CLIMBED TO HIS PERCH AS ORDERED. HIS SPIRIT HAD LIFTED FOR THE MISSION HAD NO PROBLEMS FOR HIM EXCEPT TO TEST HIS MARKSMANSHIP.

OKAY...
NOW BRING ON
THE JAPS!



PEDLAR PALMER, IN HIS HIDE, WAS ADJUSTING HIS TELESCOPIC SIGHT, COOLLY CALCULATING THE YARDS TO HIS TARGET... THE BIG TREE ACROSS THE CLEARING!

NOW, MISTER
PERISHING
BROWN...



IT WAS NEARLY NOON BEFORE THE JAPS CAME THREE OF THEM, DRAGGING A RATION TRAILER. FARMER BROWN AIMED AT THE BEND OF THE NECK AND SHOULDER OF THE MAN HE HAD CHOSEN. HIS RIFLE CRACKED...



THE SHOT FIRED, FARMER DREW BACK INSTANTLY... AND PEDLAR'S BULLET SLICED THE LOBE OF HIS EAR!

PALMER!
HE TRIED TO SHOOT
ME!



THE JAPS HAD RE-ACTED. FARVER'S TARGET HAD DROPPED LIKE A STUNNED OX, BUT THE OTHER TWO WERE OFF LIKE STARTLED RABBITS. THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH PATROL CAME FORWARD EAGERLY.

DID YOU GET EM, CORPORAL?
CORPORAL -
EVERYTHING OKAY?



NEITHER OF THE MARKSMEN, SAFE IN HIS OWN TREE, DARED MAKE THE SLIGHTEST MOVEMENT AS THE STUNNED JAP WAS TAKEN OUT OF THE CLEARING.

COME ON, BOLO ...
THE WARS OVER
FOR YOU!

HEY, DEKKO HERE.
WHAT YOU RECKON
THIS IS? JAP STEW-
OR BULLY BEEF?



FARMER'S THOUGHTS WERE IN A TURMOIL. HE HAD NO INTENT ON OF FIRING BACK — BUT HE DARE NOT EXPOSE HIMSELF TO ANOTHER SHOT FROM THE VENGEFUL PALMER.

I CAN ONLY HOPE HE THINKS HE GOT ME!



THE TENSION WAS BROKEN BY THE ARRIVAL OF A TRUCK-LOAD OF SOLDIERS ... JAP SOLDIERS!



GOOD GRIEF!
WHERE THE HECK'S
THE CORPORAL —
AND FARMER
BROWN?

THE FOUR MEN OF THE PATROL DID NOT STAND A CHANCE. THREE OF THEM DROPPED AT THE FIRST FUSILLADE OF SHOTS...

AAAGH!



PEDLAR PALMER HAD BEEN WAITING SILENTLY, UNSTIRRING IN HIS HIDE... WATCHING THE TREE OPPOSITE, NOT DARING TO MOVE. BUT THE GLINT OF THE SUN ON HIS RIFLE MUST HAVE GIVEN HIM AWAY.

SERGEANT!
ONE IN THE
TREE...
HERE!



PALMER THREW DOWN HIS RIFLE AND SURRENDERED. TOGETHER WITH PRIVATE WHEELER HE WAS PRODDED ACROSS TO THE TRUCK. FARMER WAITED BREATHLESSLY. WOULD PEDLAR GIVE HIM AWAY?

IF HE WANTED TO GET ME - HE COULDN'T HAVE A BETTER CHANCE THAN THIS!



BUT PALMER HAD NO CHANCE TO TALK, EVEN HAD HE WANTED TO. DAZED BY A BLOW FROM A RIFLE BUTT, HE WAS BUNDLED INTO THE TRUCK, AND DRIVEN AWAY. CAUTIOUSLY, FARMER CLIMBED DOWN FROM HIS HIDE.

NO BETTER GO BACK AND REPORT TO THE LIEUTENANT.



The Roots Of Evil

YET HE DID NOT GO BACK. SOMETHING DROVE HIM ON. THERE MIGHT STILL BE A CHANCE TO CAPTURE A PRISONER, TO JUSTIFY THE LOSS OF FIVE MEN.

GOT TO BE CAREFUL NOW... I MUST BE GETTING NEAR THE JAP LINES ...



THE BABBLE OF HIGH-PITCHED VOICES REACHED HIS ALERT EARS. STEALTHILY, HE INCHED FORWARD AND HIS LIPS SET IN A HARD LINE AT WHAT HE SAW.

THE COLD-BLOODED BRUTES!



PALMER AND WHEELER WERE BEING INTERROGATED MERCILESSLY. THE ENEMY WERE DEMANDING INFORMATION... INFORMATION THE TORMENTED BRITONS DID NOT HAVE.

SPEAK! WHERE IS THE SECOND REGIMENT? WHAT IS ITS STRENGTH?

I DON'T KNOW, I TELL YOU!



THROUGH THE BINOCULARS, FARMER WATCHED WITH GROWING FURY. THE ENEMY WERE TAKING OBVIOUS DELIGHT IN THE SADISTIC TREATMENT OF THE HAPLESS PRISONERS.



THEN THE JAPS LOST ALL PATIENCE. CUTTING DOWN THEIR VICTIMS, THEY CLUBBED AND BEAT THEM MERCILESSLY.

WHITE DOG!
I BELIEVE YOU!
YOU ARE EMPTY!
EMPTY VESSELS
ARE USELESS!



IT WAS ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT SHOTS OF FARMER'S LIFE. FOR HIS ANGER WAS SHAKING HIS HANDS AND IT TOOK A DEEP, DEEP BREATH TO STEADY THEM. HE WAS ONLY JUST IN TIME...

AAAGH!



JONATHAN BROWN'S RIFLE CRACKED AGAIN... AND AGAIN. FOR THE PLACID FARMER, IT WAS THE MOMENT OF TRUTH. THERE IS A TIME FOR PEACE AND A TIME FOR WAR. THE TWO CANNOT BE MIXED. HIS WEAPON WREAKED A TERRIBLE VENGEANCE.



AS THE LAST JAP TOPPLED TO THE GROUND, HE LEAPED FORWARD AND CUT FREE THE PRISONERS... JUST AS MORE OF THE ENEMY ARRIVED ON THE SCENE. JONATHAN SNATCHED UP A JAP CARBINE...



STRANGELY, FARMER ENJOYED THE FIGHT. HE FELT LIGHTER, FRIENDLIER—AS IF SOMETHING HAD BEEN RELEASED INSIDE HIM. NOW HE KNEW THE TRUE NATURE OF HIS COUNTRY'S ENEMY. HE DID NOT NOTICE PEDLAR NEXT TO HIM UNTIL HE SPOKE.

ALL RIGHT, FARMER, I'M WITH YOU! IT'LL BE QUICKER WITH THE TWO OF US.

THANKS, PEDLAR. WE'LL FORGET WHAT HAPPENED A WHILE BACK, BUT IF YOU TRY ANYTHING LIKE THAT AGAIN, SO HELP ME, I'LL SEE YOU GET WHAT YOU DESERVE...



SIDE BY SIDE, THE TWO CRACK SHOTS PICKED OFF THE SHRIEKING JAPS. BUT NOW THEY WERE NOT RIVALS. THEY WERE ALLIES. BETWEEN THEM THERE WAS A BOND OF MUTUAL RESPECT. NEVER AGAIN WOULD JONATHAN BROWN, WOODSMAN AND MARKSMAN, BE THE LONELY ONE.

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